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ALBERT SMITH AND THE PRESS.

Our constant friend and inconstant contributor, Albert Smith, has closed the following circular to all the London papers, great and small, including ourselves:—

(To the Editor of the Musical World.)

SIR,—May I request your kind attention to the following statement of my intention with respect to the admission of "Press Orders" to my "Ascent of Mont Blanc."

It is perfectly impossible for me to give any further accommodation to the shower of newspaper admissions that pour into my room every evening. The Hall holds about 430 persons; of these there are seats for 90 in the Stalls, 160 in the Area, and 180 in the Gallery. The stalls are usually all taken in advance, so that the Area is that part of the house best available; were the whole of the newspapers claiming a right to admission to send in their orders early in the evening, they would monopolise every seat. As it is at present, the Press Orders blockade an actual sum of money—varying from £20 to £25 a week—from the room. Of the holders of these admissions, it is fair to assume that not one in a dozen is, in the slightest degree, connected with either the editorial, critical, or general literary department of the paper. In fact, the chief cause of this determination on my part to stop for the future all Press Orders, is found in the fact that a few evenings since, I know upon excellent authority, a newspaper admission, admitting the usual two to my room, was sold for a shilling to an acquaintance of one of the people I employ about the building.

Again—the lower the standard of the paper, and the smaller its circulation, the more plentifully are its orders distributed. Connected myself with the Press for some time, I also know that these orders are frequently used as baits for wavering advertisers. For example: the proprietor of a new Poncho, or Shirt, or Sauce, is applied to for one or more insertions. Now, the spirited discoverers or inventors of these articles know perfectly well which papers have the greatest influence and do not require to be told that such and such a print "from its large circulation amongst all classes of society offers a desirable medium for advertisements;" and therefore they hesitate in spending their ready money on a questionable return. But the agent says, "Oh, come; give us the advertisement, and here is an order for the Holy Land, or the Adelphi," (as the case may be), and the consequence is, that instead of the intelligent critic, who is supposed to represent the paper, with his friend, the two seats are occupied by the Poncho, the Shirt, or the Sauce, who has just as much right to pay as any of the public.

I may mention, on some experience of every part of the season, that the following most important journals, *The Times*, *The Morning Post*, *The Athenæum*, *The Literary Gazette*, *The Examiner*,

The Spectator, and some others of equal position, have never sent in one order. I believe that, with most of the leading papers, the feelings of the Editors are opposed to admissions altogether.

It is far, very far, from my intention, in thus cutting off the ordinary newspaper orders, to undervalue the power of the Press. No one is more deeply convinced of its value—no one has more reason to be grateful to its critics than myself; nor am I thus acting, in childish petulance, because some writers have had the honesty to speak the truth, however unpalatable to myself it may have been. I hope, earnestly, that this may be distinctly understood.

The Editor of a paper, leading or unimportant, or any gentleman in any way ostensibly connected with its literary department, will find my best and readiest attention always paid to any application for seats in every portion of the house, even to making their comfort and accommodation the very first consideration. But the system of admitting a ruck of common orders which may have gone from one hand to another, until all trace of their pedigree, or affinity with the parent journal, is lost, is as lowering to the honourable position and independent tone of the newspaper as it is to the feelings of the person appearing before the public, whatever may be the status of his powers or ability to amuse them.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

ALBERT SMITH.

We congratulate Mr. Smith on having bell'd the cat in this instance, or, to speak less poetically, just to give a blow with the axe of common sense at the root of a deep-seated evil. Where the independence of the press is concerned, or its courteous treatment at the hands of all labourers in the plain of public amusement, our readers will believe that we should always be foremost to stand forth for the rights of our contemporaries and our own. But here neither the independence of the press, nor its courteous treatment at the hands of labourers in the plain of public amusement, is assailed or menaced, nor are the rights of our contemporaries or our own in any way compromised. Mr. Albert Smith has simply directed a stone at a crying nuisance; has bruised it; has stopt its mouth. To speak more poetically, he has bell'd the cat, and we congratulate him. It is all very fine to be well spoken of by the confraternity of the pen, but when out of, say one hundred seats, ninety-nine are sat upon by penmen, their relations or friends, a man need lecture often to bag an honest florin. This has not been the case; but, if you will throw your eye over Mr. Albert Smith's circular, you will find that something not very far off it has been the case in Mr.

Smith's area. Now, if a penman write a good notice of Mr. Smith's Ascent, Mr. Smith is gratified by the compliment; but if, excited by the penman's praise, and believing it to be genuine, the public go next night to the Egyptian Hall, and find all the best seats sat upon by penmen or their parents, who go in with free admissions, what is the use to Mr. Smith of the penman's praise? Clearly, very little use. This is the view taken by Mr. Smith of the matter; and we take the same view of this view as Mr. Smith himself. But Mr. Smith should not have said, in childish petulance, "because some writers have had the honesty to speak the truth, however unpalatable to himself," because all writers may have the honesty to speak the truth, however unpalatable to themselves, so they be well rewarded, which, as an ex-journalist, Mr. Smith should have known and recognised, however unpalatable to himself. But this by the way. We have published his circular, and stamped it with our stamp. We approve of its tenor, which has nothing base in it; and, in the columns of the *MUSICAL WORLD*, transmit it to the four corners of the earth.

We are informed that Mr. Smith has been encouraged in the step he has taken by some of the highest authorities of metropolitan journalism; and should he at any time find it necessary to write a defence of the step he has taken, we beg to assure him that the sheets of the *MUSICAL WORLD* are eager to be covered by his epigraph.

ALBONI IN AMERICA.

(From *Dwight's Journal of Music*.)

The great contralto sang twice. And what have we heard? A voice, for richness, sweetness, power, and even tearful quality of tone, unequalled in the world. A delivery as natural and perfect as the flow of water. A style, the truest living type of the true, the best Italian school—the school before Verdi and the screamers. Sonorous beauty, possessed and bestowed with most kindly and luxurious nonchalance. In a word, we experienced a new sensation, as if we were advanced to the one distinct sphere of Elysium. We feel that Alboni is the living voice of Rossini's music, and we know what Rossini's music is, and therefore know that a sensation, hitherto imagined or but half experienced, has been made wholly real to us. The sensuous music of Rossini—we use the word in its harmonic and best sense—the wholesome, bright, luxurious music of that happy type of sensibilities and senses all in tune with one another and with nature:—that is what Alboni has presented to us, and that was worthy of an Alboni to present.

Those critics who pronounce Alboni inanimate and undramatic, can never have heard her in that majestic and passionate air of Bellini, from *Sonnambula* the "Ah non credea." To our thinking no bustling energy of action, no external demonstration of feeling could so touch the soul, and so affect it with the very essence of dramatic interest, as the simple singing of these pieces by this incomparable Italian. The heart-throbs of tragedy mark every cadence of her voice in that delicious music, and her tones and modulations convey the idea of a deeper emotion, a more inward and real sentiment, such as the accessories of acting could not render more impressive, but might detract from. . . . We, after all, among the great mass of riches in which she lets herself

revel in triumph, prefer nothing to the "Ah non credea," to be mentioned directly. That is truly perfect and incomparable.

Her "Casta Diva" was gloriously given. We have heard no interpretation of this gem—not even Lind's—equal to Alboni's. She breathed out its deep, passionate trust in notes of supplication that an angel might envy. Her next effort, Rhode's brilliant "Variations," a violin composition, first sung by Catalani, and considered, twenty-five years ago, Sontag's master effort, was the perfection of vocalization. . . . In these "variations" she rises to the height of soprano excellence, while all who have analyzed voice know how she transcends all rivalry as a contralto.

Next came the drinking song from *Lucrezia Borgia*, and with it the true power and genius of Alboni. The fine vinous enthusiasm of that song, all its fervour and all its delicate aroma, were perfectly palpable to sense. It was the poetry of sensation, the harmonic expression and vindication of the senses. A Titian-like luxury of colouring, whose beauty proves its divine right to a fair share of man's devotion; for in its perfection sensuous beauty blends into the spiritual. No other singer, whom we have heard, has approached Alboni in the rendering of this "Brindisi." Here the wonderful contralto tones came out in most delicious contrast with the high ones; they were not forced out, not meretriciously and coarsely used as in the case of Carolina Vietti, but always in luxurious harmony with the brighter tints of the picture. The spirit of the song was perfectly embodied. That shake, so large and full and true and even, and prolonged till all the audience was breathless, was ended as easily as it begun, and seemed like the passive oozing out of the superabundance of blissful melody from the lips of one entranced and steeped in it. The first time, the suspense of the hearer was a little painful; the second time, relying on her perfect power, the pleasure was without alloy. But imitate it not, ye lesser stars, to whom such ornaments are painful efforts! The "Brindisi" was rapturously encored, as were the "Variations," and in both cases the repetition seemed an improvement on what had seemed already perfect.

Passing the exquisite little duet from *Don Pasquale*, which she sang so delicately and so expressively with Sangioanni, as if tempering her larger to his sweet and gentle organ,—decidedly a gem of the concert,—we come to her last and greatest effort, the "Ah! non credea," and "Ah! non giunge" from the *Sonnambula*. These surpassed all before in the higher and varied qualities of style and expression, and brought out more completely the resources of her voice. The introductory Andante was delivered with a melting, tremulous, and yet chaste pathos, in which there was no sentimental weakness, but a sustained purity of style, and a complete realization of that tearful quality of natural tone which we have heard ascribed to her. Nothing could be more finely finished or more truly in the spirit of the tender Bellini melody. The chaste embellishments were still original, and every period brought to such shapely and felicitous close, that one almost murmured: "It is just right, we would not have it otherwise;" and this indeed occurred all through the evening. But in the rapturous finale we had really a new revelation of vocal wealth and beauty. We have heard it sung equally satisfactorily, but never so sung. It was a creation of her own, of admirable beauty, and yet wholly faithful to the first intention of the music. The manner in which she would catch up, as it were with rapid, delicate, invisible fingers, those luscious, large low tones and interweave them with the brighter high ones, was to us entirely a new melodic experience, and imparted a new richness to the music.

It was the wronged maiden's bliss, restored with interest, and waking blissful, sympathetic response in every heart and every object high and low.

Evidently the charm of this singing will grow upon us all. We have never been more excited, more interiorly reached by other singers. Alboni's singing is in harmony with her whole being. It is large, luxurious, easy, quiet, sympathetic, genial. It is the perfect luxury of beautiful, delicious sound, and you are lapped in it and enjoy it, without wound or denial to any of your deeper sensibilities or aspirations.

At the second concert, the programme was Rossini-ian, and we heard this luxury of voice at home in the most luxurious music. First the "Una voce poco fa," from *The Barber* (which the bills set down to Bellini!). Here Alboni opens at once from the deep fountains of her pure contralto;—how unlike the husky, mannish, coarse sounds which other contraltos have been wont to astonish the groundlings! how rich, and round, and mellow! what a passionate expression is thrown into them! and what consummate art in phrasing and in distribution of accent and force! With what proud ease and elasticity the voice bounds away again from each well-planted step! We have heard the "Una voce" from all sorts of singers, and yet we never heard it before. The fiery *allegro* was equally perfect. To Alboni this triumph was the easiest matter in the world, as one would twirl his watch key round his thumb.

We heard too, what the Parisian critics have pronounced her greatest triumph—the brilliant *finale* to *Cinderella*, "Non più mesta," with the lovely slow introduction, which she sang with warm and delicate expression. The rest was all blaze of diamonds; the first notes of the air stood out like so many separate, central bright points, and the liquid lustre was exquisitely diffused through the variation, which was given with more rapidity than we should suppose an instrument could play it, yet with faultless precision and symmetry of outline. We began to doubt our first conclusion, and to suspect that Mme. Alboni is peculiarly herself in this fine vocal jewellery of variation singing. Still more so, when she sang Rhode's "Variations" for the violin, in which Catalani first and lately Sontag have been famous. There the melodic efflorescence was also touched with not a little of sentiment; it was not mere mechanical ingenuity of form; and the marvel was that Alboni's voice somehow reproduced the peculiar *violin-ity* of the music, giving it that nervous accent and thrilling, searching edge of tone peculiar to the strings.

Not the least pleasant item in the list was the familiar trio from *Belisario*, in which all three parts were finely blended. And the pleasantest part of it was to see how Alboni (as in all concerted pieces) made not her own voice too prominent, but rather studied (though with no conscious effort) to let tenor and bass tell to advantage. The *finale* to *La Sonnambula* again formed the glorious close, and Bellini's spirit must have heard and owned the pathos of the introduction and the rapture of the *allegro*.

AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF MADAME SONTAG.

(From *Jermann's Pictures from St. Petersburg.*)

LET not every singing mistress, however great her ability, anticipate such good fortune at St. Petersburg as that which Madame Czecca met with. She was indebted for her favourable reception to the gratitude of the amiable ambassador, her former pupil, who not only recommended her, but sang at a public concert for her benefit. This would have been nothing for Mademoiselle Sontag; for the Countess Rossi, in the midst of the high Russian

aristocracy, and of their haughty prejudices, it was an incredible deal. The concert was the most brilliant of the season, and its net proceeds were 14,000 rubles. The day after the concert, Madame Czecca showed the countess the cash account of its results.

"Ah! Henrietta," said she, "what have you done for me?"

"For you?" cried the Countess, and threw herself sobbing aloud, into her arms. "For you? No, for myself! Ah! once more, after many years, have I enjoyed an hour of the purest and most complete happiness. . . . But you will divine my feelings; the element of my existence is wanting. The sight of a theatre saddens me; the triumph of a singer humbles me; the sound of the organ, which summons others to devotion, drives me from the sanctuary. I am a fallen priestess, who has broken her vow. Art, which I have betrayed, now spurns me, and her angry spirit follows me like an avenging spectre."

Bathed in tears, she sank upon the sofa. . . . A servant entered and announced a stranger, who earnestly insisted to speak with the countess. A denial had no other result than to produce an urgent repetition of the request.

"Impossible," cried the Countess; "I can see no one, thus agitated, and with my eyes red with weeping."

"Never mind that," said Madame Czecca, "you are not the less handsome; and perhaps, it is some unfortunate person whom you can assist."

The last argument prevailed. Madame Czecca left the room, and the stranger was shown in. He was a tall figure, in Armenian costume. His grey beard flowed down to his girdle; his large sparkling eyes were ardent and expressive. For a few moments he stood in silent contemplation of the countess: and only on her repeated inquiry of the motive of his visit did he seem to collect his thoughts; and then, in a somewhat unconnected manner, explained his errand.

"I am a merchant from Charkow," he said, "and my life is entirely engrossed by my business and my family. Beyond those I have only one passion, namely, for music and song. The great fame which the countess formerly enjoyed in the artistical world reached even to our remote town, and my most ardent wish has ever been to have one opportunity of hearing and admiring her. Your retirement from the stage seemed to have frustrated this wish for ever, when suddenly we learned that, out of gratitude to your former teacher, you had resolved to appear once more before the public, and sing at her concert. Unable to resist my desire to hear you, I left business, wife, and children, and hastened hither. I arrived yesterday, and had no sooner alighted than I sent for tickets. It was in vain; at no price was one to be obtained. Countess, I cannot return home without hearing you. You are so good; yesterday, for love of a friend, you sang in public; make an old man happy, and rejoice his heart with half a verse of a song; I shall then have heard you, and shall not have made this long journey in vain."

As the dewdrops of night are absorbed by the bright rays of the morning sun, so did the last traces of tears disappear from the smiling countenance of this charming woman. With that amiable grace which is peculiarly her own, she drew an arm chair near the piano for the old man, and, seating herself at the instrument, abandoned herself to the inspirations of her genius. Her rosy fingers flew over the keys, the prelude echoed through the spacious saloon; the countess had disappeared, Henrietta Sontag was herself again; or, rather, she was Desdemona in person. The song was at an end; the musician, transported for the moment into higher regions, returned gradually to earth and to consciousness. She looked round at her audience. The old Armenian was upon his knees beside her, pressing the folds of her dress to his brow. After the pause which followed the song, he raised his countenance; its expression was of indescribable delight, mingled, however, with a trace of sadness. He would have risen, would have spoken, but could not. The singer's little hand came to his assistance. He pressed it convulsively to his lips, rose to his feet, and, in so doing, slipped a costly ring from his finger to hers. Then he tottered to the door. There he stopped, turned round, and fixed a long and penetrating gaze on the singer—

"Alas!" he exclaimed, in tones of deepest melancholy, "how

great the pity!" And with the last word upon his lips, he disappeared.

Henrietta Sontag returned to her piano; she would have continued singing, but her voice failed her. Deeply affected, she rested her head upon the music-stand, and, in mournful accents, repeated the Armenian's words. "Yes," she said aloud, "the pity is great indeed." And, sadly pondering, she sank upon the sofa.

Original Correspondence.

MR. LOWELL MASON'S LECTURES.

(To the Editor of the Musical World.)

Sir,—As the writer of the article on Mr. Mason's "Lecture on Vocal Music," noticed by your correspondent, J. M. Deems, I beg to say that I have since attended 10 or 12 lectures, and 20 or 30 lessons given by Mr. Mason at the various Normal schools establishments in this metropolis, both to adults, and children, and in the presence of many eminent professors and scholars, who were evidently much interested in his mode of teaching.

Pestalozzianism is neither more nor less, than the Baconian method of teaching philosophy applied to the general routine of school studies. Bacon taught philosophy, by investigation, and Pestalozzi applied the same principle to grammar, arithmetic, geography, music, &c. Pestalozzianism is therefore no humbug. Now, Sir, Mr. Mason is a thorough teacher of vocal music upon the Pestalozzian method, which I am sure you and every sensible man who hears it, will say is the best method ever introduced into England for class teaching. And, Sir, I hope to see it in extensive use wherever vocal music is made a part of the education of the people; even if the "whole country be flooded" with what J. M. D. is pleased to call "the very worst of teachers," if they should happen to be teachers of Mr. Mason's kind, or of his making. I am inclined to think that J. M. Deems, if he is a professor, has a horror of this said Pestalozzian system, probably because of its investigating character; and I should not wonder if the "Down Easters" and "Germans," with whom he classes Mr. Mason, and of whom he says, "they make their way only by dint of hard study," are not too wide awake for an "ole Virginian"; and this may be the secret of his abuse of them. What I have seen of Mr. Mason, and it is not a little, I feel confident there is no charlatanism about him. And as long as a man propounds to us any good thing, whether he be a "Down Easter," a "German," or an "ole Virginian," let us look at it with a Pestalozzian eye, and if it will bear the test of INVESTIGATION, let us receive it thankfully, and make the best use we can of it. I fear, Sir, that J. M. Deems has either wilfully misrepresented this matter, or that he is utterly ignorant of Mr. Mason's teaching. The cloven foot appears much too evident in J. M. D.'s squib, which seems to have been let off at random, and shows the animus of the writer too clearly to do any mischief to Mr. Mason, who is too well known here to suffer from it. As for the "very worst of teachers," which J. M. D. gives Mr. Mason the credit of producing, "who go from city to city," in the United States, "advertising to teach singing in 24 lessons," why should J. M. D. be wroth with them? If he is able to read music in "flats and sharps" upon the fixed syllable plan, he may soon put these "very worst of teachers" to the rout, and shew both the "Down Easters" and the "Germans" too, that he knows both a "Flat" and a "Sharp," when he comes in contact with them. Mr. Mason's labours in Boston are I believe both well known and well appreciated there; and I feel assured that music will not suffer at his hands in England, neither does he require any apologist here for labouring to enlighten us on the subject of Elementary Education in Music.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

A PROFESSOR OF MUSIC.

December 21, 1852.

CHEAP PIANOFORTES.

(To the Editor of the Musical World.)

SIR,—Perhaps it is wrong to laugh at the misfortunes of other persons, but I really could not help smiling on reading the letter

signed "Clericus," in your journal last week. Some people are so determined to get articles cheap, that they deserve to be cheated; and some will take infinite trouble and annoy a professional man, by a thousand questions respecting some swindling advertisement, "Clericus" now knows that there is as much trickery in the sale of pianofortes as in the sale of benefices, or horses. How would he (if he wanted to purchase a rectory or vicarage) trust to an advertisement written by the late George Robins? or who would, if he wanted to purchase a horse, trust to the jockeying advertisements in the *Times*? "Clericus" ought not to have trusted such a source, but should have given the musical profession an order to have selected an instrument at Messrs. Broadwood's; he would then have had a good pianoforte for his money, and not been a party to such a disgraceful affair as a swindling advertisement. Nothing but dear bought experience will do for persons hunting after cheap pianofortes.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

MUSICUS.

P.S. Will "Clericus" be kind enough to say what he gave for this 25 years' old pianoforte? I should very much like to know.

Dramatic.

OLYMPIC.—The *Hunchback* has been produced at this house with a new Julia—Miss Edith Heraud—who has obtained some celebrity in the provincial theatres, and who now tries her fortune with a London audience. The part of Julia, it will generally be admitted, is one of the most showy and arduous in the whole repertoire of female character. The mere reader of the play may perhaps find it little beyond a tissue of inconsistencies, but the frequenter of the theatres knows that it abounds in appeals, which, in the mouth of a powerful actress, can produce an electrical effect upon an audience. That so young a lady as Miss Edith Heraud should have mastered all the routine of the character, and should enter into the various phases which it presents, is of itself matter for great commendation, but we would warn her not to be carried away by so fallacious a guide as the applause given by a public during the first two or three nights of a *debutante's* appearance. There is no doubt that she has a good conception of the general outline of the character; she is free from positive faults; her manner is pleasing and feminine; she shuns exaggeration; and her action, though not unartificial, is generally appropriate. But the art of bringing out all the colouring of a part, of strongly awakening all the sympathies of an audience, of exhibiting that intensity of feeling which insists upon an echo, she has yet to learn, as well as several details of execution, such as the modulation of the voice and the concealment of occasional efforts for effect. In the fourth act she is indeed carried away by the force of the situation to an expression of power which does not mark the rest of her performance; yet, if we term it, as a whole, rather smooth and intelligent than passionate and stirring, we shall not be far from the truth. She has certainly achieved a fair success, but quite as certainly she will awaken in the experienced and impartial spectator a regret that she should have come so soon before a London audience, in a part which will expose her to trial by a higher standard of energy and physical force than could yet be advantageous. She was called last night at the end of the fourth act, as well as at the termination of the piece, when Miss Gordon, who had acted Helen with a great deal of spirit and vivacity, likewise made her appearance.—*Times*.

SCHUMANN AND WAGNER.

THE TWO NEW (RUSH) LIGHTS TO LIGHTEN THE DARKNESS OF

THE MUSICAL JESUITS AT LEIPSIK.

(From the *Athenæum*.)

To close my notices of the present state of music in Germany, I must speak of a few of the works which have lately been made the object of discussion there. To appreciate them justly is a duty strong in proportion as the lover of art is habitually disposed to give place to novelties. It is not how-

over, a duty in which any extraordinary difficulty is involved. Trial after trial, experience after experience, have led to the same results—to convictions increasing in strength, that, as regards composition—its aims, limits, and means—Young Germany is in a fever which, should it last, will superinduce an epilepsy fatal to the life of music. As yet, however, the most vehement upholders of the new school are not altogether comfortable in their faith. They meet, protest with all manner of evasions—they fly to the ancient resorts of weakness—they set up the most threadbare screens of incompleteness. It is wonderful, for instance, to remark how long a persevering seeker may wait; how far he may wander before he is admitted to be capable of judging of the compositions of Dr. Schumann. He has always been hearing the wrong work. Should he find quartets (though led by Herr Ernst) dull, monotonous, in idea stale and trifling, he will be referred to pianoforte music. Should this appear to him so licentious in its discords and suspensions that half a dozen false notes on the part of the player would be of small consequence, he will be requested to believe in some unheard *lied*, more "objective," as the jargon of the day runs. Should he meekly suggest that the best of good *Lieder* could hardly establish the reputation claimed for the new master, the upholders of Dr. Schumann will take a last refuge in symphonies; especially in a Symphony in B flat, described by them to be a master-work. This I heard at Leipzig, with less than little satisfaction. In all such cases of disappointment there is an answer ready stereotyped, and thought to be decisive. The listener who cannot be charmed is sure to be reminded how the great works of Beethoven were misjudged at the outset of his career. But the examples are not parallel:—Beethoven's works were for a while misunderstood, I venture to reply, because Beethoven was novel. The works of Dr. Schumann will by certain hearers be for ever disliked, because they tell us nothing that we have not known before, though we might not have thought it worth listening to. To change the metaphor—as well, it seems to me, might the *pentimenti* and chips of marble hewn off the block and flung to the ground by a Buonarrotti's chisel, if picked up and awkwardly cemented by some aspiring stone-patcher, pass for an original figure, because the amorphous idol was cracked, flawed, and stained—had the nose of a *Silenus* above the lip of a *Hebe*, and arms like *Rob Roy's*, long enough to reach its knees—as such *centos* of common phrases and rejected chords be accepted for creations of genius because they are presented with a courageous eccentricity and pretension.

This Symphony in B flat, by Dr. Schumann, for instance, however difficult it may be to admire, is not difficult to follow. The leading ideas, though neither large nor fresh, are sufficiently distinct. The principle *allegro* starts with a bold phrase, and its second subject is simple, but neither are of special interest; and though the listener may recognize occasional ingenuity of treatment, he must screw up his courage to abide the frequent wrench of modulations and discords which are little short of surgical. The second movement, a *largo* in E flat, triple time, has a flowing but insipid subject, on repetition varied by rich figurative accompaniments, after the pattern set by Beethoven in his grand orchestral *adagios*. But whereas he adorned, Dr. Schumann oppresses his theme. The effect is that of dullness laid upon dullness. The *largo* passes off into a *scherzo* in G minor. Here the composer reveals his individuality more clearly than in the former movements, by introducing varieties of rhythm. To succeed in satisfying by such abrupt alternations, requires a combination of sound taste with lively imagination, not here displayed. Whereas Beethoven in his model-works always observed proportion, harmony, and interdependence of parts, even when his fancy soared the freest, and when his ideas were most prodigally lavished. Dr. Schumann seems habitually to find any change, whatsoever, admissible, provided it be but a change. Another instance of this oddity may be cited in the *rondo* to his Pianoforte *Concerto* in A minor; where, the monotonous limping of the second subject, in place of piquing the ear, harasses it by producing an effect of lameness which retards the animation of the movement. In the Symphony; after a number of changes having been gone through, the *scherzo* comes to a drawing pause, which is a surprise, not a suspense, since there is no warning or preparation for the cessation

of the movement in favour of any other, nor any reason why several more *trios* should not have been added, so curiously is coherence outraged where contrast is intended, and climax missed in search of strange excitement. Lastly comes the *finale*, which has a busy theme; too small in its intricacy for symphonic treatment,—and in its manner not more winning than its predecessors. Less pleasurable music, in short, I have rarely made acquaintance with. Were Dr. Schumann's fancies of the freshest—were his construction felicitous—were his harmonies really new,—they would be heard under heavy disadvantage owing to the ungraciousness of his instrumentation; since, though he must be said to treat his orchestra cleverly, the general effect is heaviness without pomp and harshness without brilliancy. Yet, not to leave a single means untried, our composer does not scruple to introduce the triangle to set off a meagre phrase in his first *allegro*,—and condescends to bring back the theme of his *rondo* by a flute *cadenza*, fit enough to prepare the public for its favourite dancer in her most obtusely-angular attitude, but at variance with the spirit of music in which for the sake of professed depth of thought and sincerity of purpose we are rudely required to dispense with everything like beauty. This, however, is only according to the use and custom. The mystagogue who has no real mysteries to promulgate would presently lose his public, did he not keep curiosity entertained by exhibiting some of the charlatan's familiar tricks.

Such are a few of the considerations which have occurred to me on making further acquaintance with the writings of the composer put forth by Young Germany as superior to Mendelssohn: nay, as having taken up composition where Beethoven left it, and having done what Beethoven did not—because he could not—do. But Dr. Schumann is as clear as truth and as charming as grace themselves, if he be measured against the opera composer who has been set up by Young Germany, at the composer's own instigation, as the coming man of the stage:—I mean, of course, Herr Wagner. Concerning this gentleman's arrogant self-praise, and the love borne him by his congregation, the *Athenæum* has already spoken; and I need only say, without qualification or preface, that a hearing of his '*Tannhäuser*,' at Dresden, confirmed to the utmost every impression made by '*Lohengrin*.' Such pleasure as that opera can excite is not musical, but belongs to the choice and treatment of the legend. This is attractive and haunting, because of its fantastic romance, in spite of some defects in stage arrangement. The tale of Dame Venus, the pagan demon goddess, who held her court in the bowels of the Thuringian hills, with whom a Minnesinger sojourned for awhile, and the fatal consequences of such sojourn had already served as bases for one of Tieck's most charming *Märchen*; and Herr Wagner has not unskillfully interwoven it with one of those idyllic contests for the palm of song which also belong to the knightly old times. There is a thought, too, of great beauty in the last scene; in which, having returned to the *Wartburg*, where this temptress dwells, and narrowly escaped from her fatal fascinations, the Tannhäuser is recalled to earthly consciousness by the death-song chanted over the bier of the mortal maiden whose heart had broken for his sake. I cannot but think that it must be sympathy with the spirit of this story which can enable even the German public most soaked in transcendental mysticism to endure the manner in which it has been set to music by its inventor. Herr Wagner hardly practises what he preaches. Resolute on destroying all stage conventions, he is nevertheless determined on making his musical dramas please by every stage accessory and trick. The German managers speak with dismay of a peremptory pamphlet circulated by him, reproving the Dresden theatre for its inefficient and parsimonious execution of the '*Tannhäuser*,' and protesting against the performance of his opera, unless it be dressed out with every conceivable luxury for the eye. Being his own librettist, this novel philosopher in search of truth has no scruple against writing his opera book in rhymed verse, though he will have neither airs nor duets, and only the smallest number of concerted pieces possible. Though he does not hesitate to reduce his singers to mimes whenever it pleases him, Herr Wagner caters his best for the orchestra. Now, what truth is there in the perpetual noise of a band, if literal presentation be the object in view? Why should not the orchestra

be silent throughout a whole scene—supposing the terror or pity of the situation to require it? In one respect, however, Herr Wagner is consistent. His aversion to melody is equalled by his poverty in the article. Small matter whether he hides from *motivi* or whether *motivi* hide from him, there are only two subjects meriting such a name in the "Tannhäuser," these being the themes wrought into the overture. For, though a tolerably brilliant March, in the second act, sounds a marvel of beauty in the midst of such a wearisome chaos of spasmodic sounds, it is rhythmical rather than melodious. Yet, if ever there was a tale claiming an entirely opposite mode of treatment, it is this. The magic Bower of Venus, with its nymphs, bacchanals, and syrens, demanded something more voluptuously sweet than such a grotesque mixture of flute and cymbal as would fitly serve for table-music to the wicked and deformed old fairy *Carabosse* when she sits down to dine on her cookery sauced with poisons. The herd-boy's song on the rock in the morning-scene trails along rapidly, independent of the pilgrims' hymn with which it was meant to be combined. The contest of minstrels resembles nothing so much as a series of dreary sermons delivered by several men, in neither recitative nor *aria*, to a harp accompaniment. Alas! out of their stupefying preachment there is not to be extracted even as little as "that sweet word Mesopotamia," on the gain of which the old woman went home satisfied that she had not lost her time at church. The final *stretto* after their tiresome prosing was as welcome as is a glimpse of daylight to men waking from a nightmare, merely because it contains a few bars of climax for the voices which are successively introduced, and subsequently grouped according to the commonest Italian receipt. How low must the opera goer be brought when he can think of Verdi with complacency and longing!—in the last act, monologue frantic succeeds to monologue whining; and how either can be learnt by the singers is a mystery. But conceding that 'Tannhäuser' is to be considered merely as a recitative opera written after the leading fashion of Lulli, with an orchestra tenfold stronger than Mdle. de Montpensier's *marmite* ever dreamed of, it is a failure, if tried by its own rules. The recitative is bad and untrue; because it possesses none of those cadences ministering repose to the ear which are indispensable to the recitation of verse, and which habitually belong to the parlance of every civilized human being. Perpetual strain, perpetual emphasis, perpetual awkwardness of interval,—these are Herr Wagner's materials for that true declamation which is to carry out with improvements the famous canons of Gluck, and to make of music that utterly unmusical thing in which all the dilettante delight.

Yet more, in the use of that huge conventionalism, the orchestra—to which every other conventionalism is to be sacrificed—Herr Wagner does not seem to me felicitous in "Tannhäuser." The overture pleased me more when I heard it given by Dr. Listz's two marvellous hands on the piano than when it was rendered by Herr Reisinger's capital and sensitive band. There is a wanting of proportion and of richness in the filling up, owing to which, certain of the effects meant by the composer to be among his strongest come forth but feebly. This is to be felt in his treatment of the introduction, and yet more strongly in the *coda*, where a whirling and busy figure for the violins (owing to ill calculated sonority) is overborne by the harsh and blatant brass instruments, in place of being wrought up together with them into a rich and well-balanced *fortissimo*. Not only are the singers throughout the opera tormented as concerns their intrinsic occupation, but the acutest tones of the violin, or the group of sourest flute notes, are employed high above the male voices, without the latter being indulged with due support from beneath. After the sarcastic and arrogant depreciation of MM. Meyerbeer and Berlioz published by Herr Wagner, the world had a right to expect from him something far more rich, brilliant, and peculiar in his instrumentation than they have received. But the discoveries and innovations made by his betters he employs in the uncouth fashion of a school-boy; writing audaciously in proportion as his real knowledge is limited. Such without exaggeration are my impressions of "Tannhäuser,"—a work not to be endured to the end without melancholy wonder at the pains it has cost, and yet more painful

amazement at its being found admirable by recipients from whom a truer taste might have been expected. There is comfort, however, in thinking that beyond Herr Wagner in his peculiar manner it is hardly possible to go. The saturnal of licentious discord must have here reached its climax. It is true, the "conventionalisms" of the orchestra have still to be destroyed;—only, were this done, since all pretext of music would cease, the thing produced would no longer be within the domain of Art, but would rather come under the care of a society for the suppression of nuisances.

Though together with Herren Schumann and Wagner I speak of Herr Gade as a composer whose works are well received by a selection of the musical public in Germany, it is not because his spirit is akin to theirs. He belongs to the romantic school, it is true; but he has some real claims. These reside in a certain national individuality which (to speak fantastically) is in harmony with the snows and the glittering and the glancing meteors of the North. An ear of ordinary delicacy must be made aware by hearing Herr Gade's music that its composer is neither German nor French. But though pure, wild, and strange, it is apt to be monotonous. The pleasure decreases as the work goes on; even a few pages of Ossian are found enough to satisfy the least *blasé* and most dreamy of readers. In the prelude to his overture "Im Hochland," a delicious, almost crystalline sound is got from the orchestra, which will benefit the form of the phrase. The *allegro* begins brightly enough, still, wild and northern in its tone of gaiety. But the charm wears out, the spirit flags, and the expectation raised by so sweetly strange an invitation is followed by disappointment. A similar result was produced by a *Sonata* for pianoforte and violin, in A minor, commencing with exquisite delicacy, but falling off in interest as the composition proceeds. It is said that in his later works Herr Gade has succeeded in emancipating himself from the limits and seductions of his nationality to a considerable extent. I cannot, however, help fancying that a composer who has begun in a tone so decided and peculiar must possibly always belong to that body of national musicians of which Chopin may be called the brightest illustration, and to which Mr Erke, and M. Glinka belong, and not to that higher company of Palestras, Mozarts, Bachs, Handels, and Beethovens, who speak to all countries. Be his future what it may, however, Herr Gade is certainly one of the few rising musicians to be looked out and listened for by all who take a natural and healthy interest in Art as proceeding by development, not by destruction.

MISS DOLBY'S SOIREEs.

These *re-unions* have been as fashionably attended as in previous seasons. The programmes have presented their usual attractions, and novelty and excellence have been equally consulted. The third and last of the series took place on Tuesday evening, and was brilliantly attended. The concert opened with a fine performance of Mendelssohn's quartet, in E minor, by Messrs. Sainton, Watson, Dando, and Lucas. Mr. Sterndale Bennett's new *Sonata* duo, for the piano and violoncello, the merits of which are now well known, was performed in admirable style by the composer and Mr. Lucas. Besides these, Messrs. Lindsay Sloper and Osborne gave a finished performance of Mozart's variations in G minor, for four hands; and the last-named accomplished professor delighted those who listened to him with his execution of three of the choicest *morceaux de salon*—"Le Bijou," "Nocturne," and "Evening dew." There were also two brilliant instrumental solos—both of which were admired and applauded by Miss Dolby's fashionable guests—"Solo de Concert," on the violin, composed and performed by Mr. Sainton, and "Le Rêve," a romance for the clarinet, composed by Müller, and executed by Lazarus. The selection of vocal music was, as usual, good. Not to speak of Miss Ursula Barclay's "L'Addio" (Mozart), or of Mr. Frank Bodda's "Madamina" (*Don Giovanni*), or of the dainty madrigal, "Down in a flowery vale,"

with which the *soirée* terminated, we may just say that Miss Dolby sang a selection from Handel's *Belshazzar*, the solo, in a very admirable setting, of the 126th psalm, by Mr. W. S. Waley (of whom it is not too much to say, that he is one of the most promising of the young composers of the day), two national airs, "Oh! Bay of Dublin" (air—the "Last rose of summer"), "Charley yet," and last, not least, two of the recently published six duets, by Henry Smart, "The Greenwood" and "The Gondola" (of which Mr. Macfarren will shortly render us some account), and sang each and every of them in that artistic manner which gives an interest to everything she undertakes. In the duets Miss Dolby was ably assisted by Jullien's interesting and promising *protege*, Miss Ceely Nott. To conclude, two glees of Horsley, "By Celia's arbour," and "When the wind blows," were remarkably well sung by Messrs. Francis, Land, Howe, and Frank Bodda, members of the Glee and Madrigal Union.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

(For the Musical World.)

Hark! what solemn joyous sound
Is borne on midnight air,
O'er Judah's plains?
Sure those tones are not of earth—
That radiant Presence too:
Diffusing light around.
The Spirit thrills with awe,
Humanity is afraid;
But Peace and Mercy are the tidings
Sent from Heaven to Earth;
"A Saviour is born:"
Born to reconcile the fallen Child of Earth with God.
The Propheesied of Centuries
Is come at last.
The incarnate Son of God reposes in his Mother's arms,
A gentle Babe:
Loveliest emblem of Humility,
Come to do "the will of Him that sent Him."
The assembled host of Heaven's unfallen ones,
Take up the wondrous strain.
Angelic voices swell the chorus;
The burden of their song,
"Glory to God, Peace, Goodwill to Men,"
With Heaven's own melody is sung
The love of God to man.

The shepherds see their infant Saviour,
And Eastern Maji, Heaven directed, too, are there.
Thus Wisdom, and simple Faith,
First worship Him together,
Before whose eye all are equal.

A—b—a O—t—y.

TALES OF THE STAGE.

WRITTEN BY AUNT ANNE.

No. 1.—MR. WILLIAM THOMPSON.

CHAPTER II.

AN ACTRESS OF OLD WORK AND HER HEIRESS.

The phrase so hackneyed by all farce writers yet so invariably acceptable to an audience, namely, "I never had a father and was born nowhere," may in its ordinary sense, I believe, justly apply to me, seeing that I never heard more of such an appendage to my family history as a father than the fact that my own name being Anne Lambert, it was just possible that a male progenitor of the same distinguished name might have claimed the honour of my paternity had he been so disposed. My mother however passed

for a widow, and her position of actress of all work in a country theatre, rendered any speculation on the subject a matter of no interest to any one. The life of an actress of all work may be defined by a consideration of that of any drudge in any station; an individual who performs the hardest possible work with the least possible remuneration and less credit—in addition to which unpromising state of things, no drudge was ever yet known to exist without a certain amount of blighted ambition, which uncomfortable trait develops itself most commonly in railing at some more fortunate persons to whose success they invariably attributed their own abject position. For instance my poor mother's Mordecai at the time I can remember her, was the lady who personated the first old woman of the company—how well do I recollect this crummy, dignified, but truly kind hearted individual, and though I placed implicit faith in my mother's bitter lamentations over managerial favouritism—managerial injustice and the infinite superiority of a figure rejoicing in a preponderance of skin and bone, over "the too, too solid" flesh and blood, which she irreverently stigmatized as fat, yet I could never refrain from joining in the rich laugh which invariably communicated itself from the jolly subject of these reprimands to her audience; nor could all my mother's sneers subdue the rebellious tears which I never failed to shed on her velvet train whenever it fell to my lot to sustain that appendage, during her moments of regality and anguish, and anguish as an oppressed Queen or injured Duchess. Never shall I forget the indignation with which I repudiated my mother's attempt to induce me to elevate the train of the Duchess of York, one particularly wet night, that the audience might have a complete view of the muddy boots, and cotton appendages which the poor lady had been unable from a hasty toilet to change. "Hold the train low, child, and take great care to keep close to me, and I will give you a new silver braid for your tunic," were her Grace's final instructions as I pattered after her on to the stage. "Higher, higher, you imp," whispered my mother, who was standing on the stage in a meek attitude, attired as a nun; an expressive shake of the fist accompanied this *aviso*; but in vain, conscientious scruples and the silver braid prevailed. The muddy boots were lost in the dignified sweep of the velvet and catskin, and my mother's threatened cuffing was received by me on our return home in the silence of stern and inspired virtue. Such scenes as these being of frequent recurrence, began in time to impregnate my own young nature with a sufficient portion of my mother's bitterness to make me contrast very sadly my own humble position with that of others whose lines of business, as the phrase goes, was clearly defined. For instance, how charming it must be, I thought, to be able to command the ever ready laugh which followed the soubrette's repartee, or to go on the stage arrayed in white muslin, and dishevelled locks, or blue satin and a tin foil tiara like our beautiful leading lady; and apropos of this girl, my mother's aspirations after the position held by the good Mrs. Martin, were reflected in a truly filial way, in my heart of hearts, as I watched with intense admiration the performances of Miss Plantagenet Jones. This young lady was my belle ideal of perfection on the stage, and perfect happiness off. What a privilege was hers, when bouncing about the green room, to have half the actors emulating each other in all manner of petty services to the fair tyrant; how truly glorious to behold her half sail, half bound on to the stage twenty minutes after the appointed hour, when the rehearsal was called of a morning, and addressing the prompter as John, the awful bugaboo of us poor *grand utilites*, bid him hold his tongue if he presumed to remind her that the company had been waiting for her this half hour. But above all what was the pinnacle on which this favoured one stood, when even the manager himself condescended to shake hands with her, while the cadaverous hero, the seedy lover, and even the all powerful, best dressed, best paid member of the company, the low comedian, himself crowded round her to echo back the managerial praise in compliments less remarkable for point than high flavour. As to my mother, she contented herself on such occasions with a vicious wink towards some individual whom the capricious beauty had not selected to play their pet parts in one of her pieces—whilst Mrs. Martin scarcely raising her eyes from her eternal knitting, laughingly bid the fair Julia beware lest her head be turned by all that

nonsense—how often after such scenes have I stolen out into the fields and lanes to give vent to my overcharged heart in frantic rehearsals of such passages as most frequently secured for the object of my admiration the highly coveted need of applause. Again and again the hedgerows rang to my small treble parodies of Miss Plantagenet Jones, shrieks of agony, whilst flinging my arms wildly around a suppository lover in the shape of a conveniently sized tree, and addressed its branches in such passionate torrents of eloquence, that I not unfrequently provoked unlooked for replies in the loud guffaws of some passing rustic, a result which drove me back to my dismal home full of tragic reflections upon the fatality which I mentally determined was eating away my young life, and privately hurrying me to an untimely grave; I had even figured to myself a funeral procession, in which the manager's own white handkerchief should stream with remorseful tears, while the entire company hung in late repentance over my flower strewn tomb. These sombre visions, however, disappeared, and I was brought rapidly back to life one memorable night by an unexpected round of applause—oh, this applause—this act of hand clapping! often the merely mechanical full stop which designates the termination of any sentence delivered by a favourite performer—never shall I forget the rapturous astonishment with which I heard for the first time in my life my own words so emphasized.

I was playing a very insignificant part as a matter of course, but, by an oversight of a stern uncle (enacted by the stage manager, who usually transferred all the telling lines from the subordinate parts to his own, without the smallest reference to the author's intentions) I, a mere page, was permitted to speak a noble sentiment, and, defying to the teeth that most resolute of stage villains, good old Mr. Martin, swear that I preferred death to dishonour. The effect of this grand line, given at the top of my small voice, accompanied by a significant tap upon a tin thing I wore at my side in the firm belief of its being a sword, "brought them down;" but so great was my astonishment at the effect I had produced that when the ruffian I addressed ordered a very old man, whom he designated as his brave comrades, to bear the traitor to the lowest dungeon of the castle, instead, I say, of permitting myself to be borne off amidst fearful struggles to the aforesaid dungeon, to wit, the green room, I stood in the confusion of my triumph curtsying to the audience in my male attire, with a correct imitation of Miss Plantagenet Jones's cumber under the fire of a volley of bouquets. The consequences of this most "unprofessional conduct" might have been fearful but for the kind interference of dear old Martin, who suggested to the stage manager that in my youth and inexperience I had clearly mistaken the applause resulting from his own artistic delineation, for an encore to my fine speech. This interpretation of the affair, though by no means remarkable for strict veracity, or personally flattering to me, yet saved me from the wrath of the tremendous manager, to say nothing of a substantial demonstration of maternal disapprobation. The ultimate effect, however, was the establishment of a friendship founded upon a mutual exchange of good will between the Martins and myself, which was destined to prove my greatest blessing at that most trying period of my life, when I became in the most desolate sense of the word, an orphan. I never can recollect this bitter portion of my career without a pang, and something very like remorse, as the fear haunts me that in resenting, as I sometimes did, my poor mother's frequent exhibitions of temper, I was unconsciously irritating the nervous malady under which her wayward spirit and elighted ambition finally sunk to rest in the grave. For many days before her death she had been unable to fulfill any of her duties at the theatre, and then I first learnt that there were other traits of a professional nature besides the invariable spirit of rivalry, and this it was, that while contesting for the most petty advantages, and the most insignificant chances of public favour, the hearts of actors and actresses invariably respond to the claims of a fellow-sufferer, or the calls of distress. Artificial in manners and petty in their aims they may be; often depraved in their habits, narrow minded in their enmities, and tyrannical in authority, but the necessity for endurance, the habit of suffering, and, above all, the peculiar lightheartedness and *bonhomie* developed by their erratic habits and associations seem somehow to

imbue their hearts with a warmer instinct of "that charity which covereth a multitude of sins" than any other equally marked class (except sailors) I have ever met with. These were new features in my associates that broke gratefully upon me; and even my poor mother, whilst languidly partaking of the little delicacies which were being constantly sent by every member of the company, grumblingly owned that, though they would rarely stretch out a hand to keep a body in life, "the creatures" were always ready to smooth their passage to the grave. But the acerbity of this half compromise was completely conquered when the first Saturday after her absence from duty a little packet was put into my hands, containing her salary, with the manager's kindly assurance that it should be sent for as long a period as was necessary to restore her health. An unusual moisture gleamed in her dim eyes as I read, in a choking voice, the kind note aloud, and turning feebly on her bed she murmured "God bless them, they will be kind also to my fatherless one." After a pause she added "What time is it, Anne?" "Eight o'clock, Mother," I replied, looking from the window. "Can you see the church clock so far off, dear?" "Do you not remember that, Mother, and that we always regulate our going to the theatre by it," I returned. "True, true," she replied, "but I forget many things now. Open the curtains, dear, and tell me what it is shines so brightly on that wall." "The reflection of the setting sun, Mother, gilding the distant church window." "Yes, I know," she replied, sadly; "I have before admired it, and now I wish I had oftener shared its glorious light as I once remember to have seen it stream across the chancel pavement. I have sometimes thought I should like to be buried in that streak of sunshine, or beneath the old window, the yew trees are so shady there; but Anne, my own Anne, are you not going to the theatre, surely 'tis time?" "Not to-night, Mother, I will not leave you," I cried, strangely affected by her unusually tender manner towards me. "No, no, dear," she replied, "I feel much easier to night, and a calm has come over me such as I have rarely felt; go at once, love, and tell me what is your costume to-night?" "Only one of the attendants on Ophelia's—" funeral, I would have added, but the words stuck in my throat. "In that case," said my poor mother, "my little gold cross will not be out of place, you have often pleaded for it, darling, now 'tis your own." "Not to-night, mother, oh, not to-night." "Yes, my Anne, to-night—to please me,—and now go, dear, I wish to sleep—return soon, God bless thee, my own, own Anne."

(To be continued.)

Foreign.

PARIS.—*Luiza Miller* has been given at the *Italiani* four times with undiminished success. *Sophie Cruvelli* enchains her audience nightly by her powerful and magnificent performance. *Mdlle. Vera* has made her *réentrée* as *Adina* in the *Elisir d'Amore*, and was well received. *Belletti* and *Calzolari* were both excellent in *Belcore* and *Nemorino*. *M. Florio*, a debutant, did not snuff out *Lablache* or *Ronconi* as *Dulcamara*. *Vieuxtemps* is creating a *furor* in Paris by the performance of his third concerto. *Meyerbeer* was present at his last concert.

MARSEILLES.—The reopening of the *Cercle Lyrique* has lately taken place. *Rossini* did not decline the proffer of honorary president. In a letter to the directors of this Musical Athenæum, as spiritual as complimentary, he accepted the presidency with profound thanks. The banquet-hall presented a *coup d'œil* truly magical, and the greatest hilarity and the most amicable feeling reigned throughout the entire repast. At the dessert, *M. Boze*, President of the Office, gave a series of toasts. But that which carried the most extravagant applause, was the health of *Rossini*, which *M. Boze* delivered as follows:—"Gentlemen, I have the honour to propose the greatest musical name of modern times—to the immortal author of the *Barbiere* and *Moise*—to that sublime genius

which has been able to realize, with the same felicity, passions the most dramatic, and characters the most comic—to the sire of thirty *chefs d'œuvres*, who, of his own accord, snatched himself from his laurels in the midst of his glory, and whose regretful silence has created a void so deeply felt on our lyric scenes—to our honorary president, to Rossini!—a name endeared to all lovers of art—a name popular in all corners of the globe, and which will transmit itself from age to age, ever young and fraternally united with the mighty name of Mozart."

Madame Lafon has achieved an immense success in *Norma*. All Marseilles is in raptures with her, and the press is loud and unanimous. "If what the critics say be true, Grisi and Sophie Cruvelli will have to look after their bays. Madame Charton, too, has been lauded infinitely in Adalgisa.

Ernst has arrived, and will soon give a concert. All Marseilles is full of curiosity to hear the magic strains of the celebrated violinist.

BRUSSELS.—The music of Meyerbeer's *Struensee* was played lately at the Concert of the *Conservatoire*, under the direction of M. Fétis, with great success.

COULOGNE.—At the Society's Concerts, M. Ferdinand Hiller conducted Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. He has since left Cologne for Paris.

Reviews of Music.

"THE MALACHITE POLKA"—Composed by H. KÜCHLER. Jullien and Co.

We can recommend the "Malachite Polka," and warmly too. It was composed expressly for Jullien's Concerts, and was received with universal favour, during the last weeks of the series, when performed. M. Küchler has written a very brilliant, elegant, and striking dance, which is certain to captivate every ear. The opening phrase is particularly tuneful, and will be welcomed at each return with pleasure. The Polka is in B flat, with a broad and melodious episode in G flat, very happily contrasted with the first theme. The "Malachite Polka" has only to be heard to be admired.

"TOPSY'S POLKA"—By GERARD STANLEY. Jullien and Co.

"Topsy's Polka" has much less pretension than its predecessor. It has, nevertheless, the merit of being exceedingly danceable, and with less of the nigger quality in its tunes than might be anticipated from its title and from the author's own annexation of the words, "*Diablerie Nègre*," to the introduction. "Topsy's Polka" will no doubt find favour in public esteem from its connection with the all-absorbing theme, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

"AMETHYSTE"—Polka Brillante Pour Piano—Composée Par WILLIAM G. F. BEALE. Campbell, Ransford, and Co.

The "Amethyste," on the other hand, has more pretension than either of the preceding, and while more musician-like than the last, is less musician-like than the first. Both Polka and trio are in the key of E flat. The style of the whole is brilliant and dashing. It is well written for the instrument, and will make a capital show piece for moderately endowed performers.

"MUSIC OF THE TYROL"—Nos. 1 and 2, "Evening Bells," and "A Tyrolean Air"—Composed by HERR VEIT RAHM—Arranged for the Pianoforte or Harp, by J. O. SMITH, of Cheltenham. J. Mitchell, Bond Street.

These are two of the most popular *landlers*, which Herr Rahm performed with such skill and success, on the national instrument of the Tyrol (*zither*), at the concerts of the Tyrolean minstrels at the St. James's Theatre. They are both very pleasing, and both easy to play on the piano, for which they are skillfully arranged. The second, a very graceful German waltz in C, is the best, al-

though the first is the easiest. Both are very good and attractive exercises for learners, and as such may be recommended.

"THE ROSE"—Ballad. Sung by Miss Dolby—Music by BRINLEY RICHARDS. T. Chappell.

"The Rose" is a new edition of one of the best modern ballads—"The blind girl's address to a Rose"—for which its own merits, coupled with the expressive singing of Miss Dolby, acquired a speedy and a wide popularity. The present issue is in the key of D, transposed to accommodate the majority of voices. We see no reason, however, why the title should be altered.

"SWEET SPIRIT COMFORT ME."—Herrick's Litany for the voice, with accompaniment for piano-forte. By BRINLEY RICHARDS. Cramer, Beale, & Co.

Mr. Brinley Richards has dedicated this song to his friend and great composer, Meyerbeer. As might have been expected he has taken universal pains with it, and old Herrick's Litany has fared well in the setting. The opening phrase in F minor expresses the simple and beautiful words,

"In the hour of my distress
When temptations may oppress
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit comfort me—"

with great purity and chastity. Equally well adapted are the ensuing lines,

"When I lie within my bed,
Sick in heart and sick in head,
And with doubts discomfited,
Sweet Spirit comfort me,"

to a flowing and devotional phrase in A flat, which, after an effective repetition of the words, "Sweet spirit, &c," leads back to the opening phrase and tempo. Another episode in F major, on the words

"When the priest his last hath pray'd, &c."

is again the means of bringing us back to the first subject, which, with some modification and addition once more brings us back to the flowing and devotional phrase in A flat. This in its turn modulates again into F minor, in which key a brief but expressive coda, on the words "Sweet Spirit, &c." conducts the song—one of the best and most careful that has proceeded from its author's prolific pen—to an appropriate close. When we add that the song is not unworthy to be dedicated to Meyerbeer, we need add no more.

Provincial.

MUSIC AT MANCHESTER.—(From our Own Correspondent).—When we penned a few lines last week under this head, we little thought it would be labour lost, (one does not like to do anything in vain, and we did feel somewhat disappointed at not seeing our notice of Charles Hallé's second classical chamber concert. As, of all the concerts, we take the greatest interest and feel the most delight at these, it seems ungrateful to omit even one notice, brief and hasty, feeble and inadequate to their merits as our lucubrations may be, and we are totally at a loss to know how last week the letters arrived too late. We do not find fault under the circumstances with the substitution of the critique from the *Manchester Examiner and Times*, nor do we quarrel with the critique itself, the writer appears to be fully imbued with right feeling for the classical; he certainly might have said much more and with truth of Hummel's splendid quartet and its fine performance, and we think he did but scant justice to the fair vocalist, Miss Deakin. His remarks on Beethoven's wonderful Sonata, are only marred by the slur on Mr. Macfarren, which we cannot agree with him in, any more than you, Mr. Editor. When a writer like Mr. Macfarren attempts to fathom the depth and meaning of some of Beethoven's passages, it is far easier to cavil at his remarks, than for the cavalier himself to produce a clearer or a better elucidation of the profound mysteries of Beethoven's mighty inspirations. We have the highest esteem for Mr. Macfarren, and, *par parenthèse*, we should

be glad to see an article from his powerful pen in the *Musical World* on the genius and works of F. Schubert, an analysis of his principal chamber compositions, with, if possible, a narrative of his brief career. Two of his trios for piano-forte, violin, and violoncello, have been heard in Manchester, which exhibit such extraordinary talent that we should be glad to know something more of the writer and his other productions.—Our notice of Mr. C. A. Seymour's first Quartet Concert will still be in good time in this next number, as it did but take place last week. The Monday Night Concert at the Free Trade Hall this week was quite of a superior character, and the most pleasing we remember to have "assisted" at, as the French have it. Miss Vinning—the once Infant Sappho—was its chiefest charm. There is a fascination about this young lady which cannot be described—it reminds one of Madame Anna Thillon—yet Madame Thillon was a woman—whilst Miss Vinning is but a girl—in fact, we like her all the better for it, that she does not assume the womanly in her manners. After the march from the *Prophète* on the organ, the concert opened with the unison chorus with tenor principal from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, which went smoothly as ever, followed by a song of H. Farmer for Miss Vinning, "Oh! I love the morning," which showed her flexibility and extent of voice, more than her peculiar charm of manner. The choir, who had as usual a good deal to do, now substituted Miss Flower's, "Now pray we for our country" for Palestrina's, "Alla Trinita." Mr. Delavanti had a song in each part—in which, by the way, his voice was more pleasing than usual—S. Glover's "Come to the valley," and Lover's "Sally"—the latter was encored—when he substituted an Irish song, beginning "What's the matter with your mother?" which pleased the gallery folk amazingly. "La mi dorabella," to English words, was given by Messrs. Perring, Walton, and Delavanti; it does not sound as well to our ears in this version as in the original Italian. What shall we say of Miss Vinning's Scotch ballad, "O Logie, O Buchan, O Logie the laird?" Why that she fairly won all hearts; and an encore being the consequence, she gave the popular "Cherry ripe" as charmingly. The choir then performed one of their greatest achievements yet, in our estimation, in the delicate way they gave Bishop's "Sleep, gentle lady." The worthy knight knows the capabilities of our Manchester glee and chorus singers well (although he has not heard them now for some years), yet he would have been astonished to have heard the precision and delicacy with which this favourite glee of his was executed by above thirty voices, the four parts multiplied by eight voices to a part! It is the best thing we have heard them do, and in the merit of which Mr. Banks should not be lost sight of. Mr. Perring had a nice song of his own in the first part, "Were I a dauntless cavalier," and a solo and chorus of Wallace's in the second, with a pleasing original melody enough, but the staccato subdued choral accompaniment is a direct copy of Donizetti's "Com e' gentil" and its *la la la*, &c.; like it also it is called a serenade. After another pleasing performance by the choir of Macerone's ancient choral ballad, with its quaint words, "I am a poor man, God knows," Miss Vinning showed her taste and power of expression in Linley's plaintive and pathetic song about "Little Nell and her grandfather" ("Humphrey's Clock" and "The Old Curiosity Shop"); with so much feeling did she give it, that Charles Dickens himself would have been deeply affected had he been present. She was encored, and gave a merry piece of her own instead. An effective trio and chorus of Brinley Richards, "Up! quit thy bowers," closed the first part.

The second part opened merrily with a strain of Flotow's from *Stradella*—English words (*always* here)—"Hark! the merry breezes bearing." Miss Vinning and Mr. Perring sang most sweetly Wade's old admired duet, "I've wandered in dreams." Messrs. Perring, Walton, and Delavanti then did their best in a catch, "What shall we sing," but not successfully. The choir next had the compliment of an encore for Rainer's Tyrolean chorus, "Come, brothers, tune the lay," when they gave "Here in cool grot." Miss Vinning's most characteristic effort, her own composition, as a child, "The laughing galop," was reserved as the last piece before the concluding chorus glee; it was, as usual, encored, and we do not wonder at it. We fancy her clear musical laugh is still ringing in our ears! A more

select audience, or a more delighted one we have not seen at the Monday Night Concerts; and really for the price, the treat is as great, in a vocal way, almost as Jullien's was in an instrumental. There is another parallel between Jullien's Concerts and Mr. Peacock's (differing as they do confessedly in the talent employed, &c.), and that is in their success, and gradual improvement in the quality of music performed at them. At first the Monday Night Concerts were as thinly attended as almost ever Jullien's were, whilst now they are almost as eagerly crowded by carriage people in the reserved seats, as by caps and fustian jackets in the gallery; and all are gratified.

On Monday week Mr. C. A. Seymour began his series of four quartet concerts at the usual place,—in the large room of the Chorlton or Medlock Town Hall. The following was the programme:—

PART I.

Quartet, No. 78, in B flat	Haydn.
Songs, Mrs. Beatrice Meyer	Mendelssohn & Molique
Sonata, in A major (pianoforte and violin)	Mozart.
Miss Samson, and Mr. C. A. Seymour.	

PART II.

Quartet, in E minor, Op. 73 (two violins, tenor, and violoncello)	Guillaume Taubert.
Song, Mrs. Beatrice Meyer, "The last adieu"	Edward Perry.
Selection, pianoforte—{ Romance, "Le Zephyr"	Schulhoff.
{ Polonaise, Op. 40	Chopin.
Miss Samson.	
Quartet, in E minor (two violins, tenor, and violoncello)	Mendelssohn.
Quartet executants—Messrs. Seymour, Thomas, Baetens and Lidel.	

We were glad on entering—just as the allegro in Haydn's quartet had commenced—to find the room fuller than we remember to have seen it at any former quartet concert, and were no less glad to see so many well-known amateurs and real lovers of music present. There is something about Seymour's concerts which puts one at home at once, like a large private party (without any of its stiffness or ceremony), and so many faces that are familiar from seeing them year after year at this pleasant reunion, that increases the comfort and enhances the delight of every one present. Haydn is enjoyed more from contrast now, when heard in a quartet occasionally. His great successors in this school—Beethoven and Mendelssohn—have so enlarged, and expanded, and refined upon it, as to make Haydn occasionally seem quaint and old-fashioned in comparison. We were especially pleased with the second movement—the adagio. Mr. C. A. Seymour had an obligato passage for his first violin that was really delicious. The minuet and trio, strongly characterised by the writer's style, were played with spirit, and the finale was taken at the proper speed. Mrs. Beatrice Meyer is an amateur, and it served still further to confirm the idea of a private party to see Mr. Seymour lead her to the piano from among the audience. She has good expression and style, and we wish her voice was equally pure. It might be timidity—(we did not detect any)—but, under the circumstances, we must not be too critical. Miss Samson played the accompaniments to her songs very neatly. Miss Samson and Mr. Seymour next gave Mozart's duo Sonata in A major in good style. The pianoforte did not blend, to our mind, with the violin. There was great and daring novelty in the quartet which opened the Second Part—by Guillaume Taubert—(conductor of the Opera at Berlin). Seymour again left Thomas second, Baetens viola, and Lidel cello. In the second movement—a quaint scherzo allegretto—there are some new effects; the "andante con moto" is remarkable for its full harmonies, and the finale bustling and short. The whole was well played on all hands. Our remarks about Mrs. Meyer and Miss Samson, in the first part, will again apply to them in the second. The great treat was reserved for the last—Mendelssohn's quartet in E minor—in which Thomas led and Seymour followed. It was gloriously played.

WINDSOR.—Two concerts, "under especial patronage," were given by Mr. Angell, at the Theatre Royal, on Thursday and Friday evenings last. Upon each occasion he had the good fortune to secure the services of Miss Rose Braham and the twin sisters Brougham. The chief hit of each evening was Glover and Jeffrey's "Topsy's song," sang with an archness and buoyancy quite topsy-like by Miss Rose Braham. Her other songs were well received. The duets of the sisters Brougham were quietly and prettily given.

LEEDS MUSICAL UNION.—The second Dress Concert of the Musical Union was given on Monday evening, and the number and character of the audience again assembled, as at the first concert, shew that these efforts to overcome the difficulty of divided patronage, which has of late years militated against the success of various attempts to cater for the musical entertainment of the people of Leeds, have in a great measure accomplished their object. There seems to be a musical union as far as public patronage is concerned, and the question remains, whether this can be preserved by the success of the management in ministering satisfactorily to the taste and expectations of their subscribers. Thus far, we see no reason to doubt this, although we apprehend that, as the excuses of inexperience become less, greater achievements will be expected than have yet been accomplished. As on the occasion of the first concert, the orchestra on Monday night was numerous and complete, and under the able leading of Mr. Willy, a violinist of high ability. Mr. Spark was the conductor, and he most admirably sustained his arduous duties. The four overtures, *Fidelio*, *Masaniello*, *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Semiramide*, were exceedingly well played, and *Masaniello* was encored. The principal performers were Mr. Willy and Mr. Bowling (first violin), Mr. T. Smith (second violin), Mr. Phillips sen. (viola), Mr. T. Haddock (violinello), Mr. Willoughby (double bass), Mr. Saynor and Mr. Sykes (flute); and the brass and other wind instruments were in efficient hands. In addition to the overtures the instrumental performances included a violin solo of Kalliwoda, by Mr. Willy, played with great care and effect, and a quartet in G, of Beethoven's for violins and violoncello, by Messrs. Willy, G. Haddock, Bowling, and T. Haddock, which was executed in a very satisfactory manner. The vocalists were Miss Birch and Mr. Sims Reeves. It would be needless to offer any words of commendation in favour of these delightful and popular artistes; and in no respect did their singing on Monday evening disappoint the expectation of their audience. Both were in good voice and sang admirably. The first song was by Mr. Sims Reeves, "Fra poco," from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, in which the strength of his splendid high notes was fully displayed. Before my eyes," from Weber's *Der Freyschutz* was charmingly sung by Miss Birch. "The death of Wellington," by Macfarren, was finely sung by Mr. Sims Reeves, and elicited an encore, for which the singer, with good judgment, substituted another song "While memory lasts." Miss Birch and Mr. Sims Reeves sang the duet "Fairest Maiden," from the *Jessonda* of Spohr, but, though admirably rendered, it lost much of its effect as a detached piece for a concert-room. Mr. Sims Reeves' peculiar vocal excellences could not be better shown than they were in the scena "A te diro" (Donizetti); and Miss Birch did full justice to Mrs. Mackinlay's song, "When thy heart," and to a very pleasing piece, Venetianisches Gondel-lied, by Stigelli, in both of which she accompanied herself on the pianoforte. The last song was from Balfe's *Sicilian Bride*, "When we recal," charmingly sung by Mr. Sims Reeves.—Mr. Hatton's entertainment of his numerous audience in the Music Hall, last Saturday evening, was received with relish; and it was no light undertaking to keep so large an assemblage amused for two hours by one individual, and with an almost entirely vocal performance. But Mr. Hatton succeeded. His auditors were in the humour to enjoy his rare abilities, though the graver selections which he gave were also received with hearty applause. After a German Ballad by Curschmann, "She is mine," and Handel's love song of Polyphemus, in which the rich burlesque and ponderous gambols of the love-sick giant's fancy were given with just appreciation of the serio-comic idea; and a pianoforte arrangement of a composition by Corelli, Mr. Hatton struck into the comic vein with the capital old song of "The Leather Bottle," and in answer to a vehement encore, gave instead

"Simon the Cellarer," an excellent song composed by himself, and admirably sung. Then followed the comic scene, "The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe," and the eccentric song "The little fat man," the latter of which was demanded and given a second time. At the commencement of the second part, Mr. Hatton proposed, as the pianoforte was so good a one, to give an instrumental piece not in the programme,—a duet with Mr. Sparke, the successful conductor of these concerts, who had kindly consented to take a part, and a piece from the *Huguenots* was played by these gentlemen in a most effective manner. The songs which followed were chiefly humorous, "Old King Cole"—a new version; "King Canute, or the Cold Water Cure," and "The Watkins' Evening Party," each of which Mr. Hatton introduced with a few appropriate and witty remarks, and in each he exhibited a vivacity and delicate musical discrimination that drew down thunders of applause. We must mention a song of a totally different character, "Day and Night," composed by Mr. Hatton, which he sang with pathos. It was also a great treat to listen to his performance of that favourite and familiar composition by Handel, "The Harmonious Blacksmith."

HAMPSHIRE.—THE DISTINS' CONCERT.—Our old friends the Distins, who are always welcome here, and never fail to gather round them an audience imbued with a sound educational or inherent musical taste, have this week paid us another visit. We are attracted to the Distins' Concerts by a desire to be really gratified, and we are never disappointed. Who could have listened to their performance on Tuesday evening of a selection of "Der Freyschutz" commencing with that beautiful slow movement in the overture, without cheerfully yielding to them that praise to which they are entitled. For purity of tone and taste they are unequalled. Every instrument is subdued to the proper quantity and quality of its true expression; nothing predominates. Their combinations are the very perfection of harmony, and while listening to them we can hardly conceive that anything more or less could increase the delightful effect they produce. The great improvement of brass wind instruments has been mainly owing to the mechanical and musical skill of the Distins, and Henry Distin has just brought within a more compact form and certainty of action the slide valves of the *Cornet-a-piston*, which makes the instrument as facile of execution as the flute. Mrs. Theodore Distin sang two ballads, and took the leading parts in the Glee and Duets, and these vocal introductions gave a pleasing variety to the Concert. It was delightful to be refreshed, even by association, with that beautiful Glee of Horsley's:—

By Celia's arbour, all the night,
Hang, humid wreath, the lover's vow,
And hapsly at the morning light
My love shall twine thee round her brow:
Then if upon her bosom bright
Some drops of dew should fall from thee,
Tell her they are not drops of night,
But tears of sorrow shed by me.

—The fine Madrigal, "Down in a Flow'ry Vale" (Festa, 1541), was beautifully sung by the three brothers and Mrs. Theodore Distin, and repeated in obedience to the enthusiastic calls of the audience. The Messrs. Distin introduced on this occasion, their much admired "Cuckoo Galop," which is so deservedly popular that the eleventh thousand is, we understand now in the press, and the hearty applause of the company, who would only rest satisfied with its partial repetition, welcomed it in the same spirit with which it has been received elsewhere. Mr. Willy performed a solo of Thalberg's on the piano-forte in a manner that exhibited a complete mastery over the instrument. The elder Mr. Distin came before the audience again as fresh and as vigorous as when, in his early days, he accompanied the best of the English singers, in Dr. Arne's celebrated Bravura "The Soldier Tired." He is now the exponent of the melody himself, and with a tone as crisp and silvery as ever rang through the spirit-stirring trumpet's voice. Long may he continue to receive the homage of a delighted public, and while, with the assistance of his talented sons, he can offer to the public such a concert as we have just had the pleasure of hearing, we can heartily assure him at least an earnest welcome to Southampton.—*Hampshire Independent*.

TONBRIDGE WELLS.—W. C. GOODBAN'S CONCERT, MORNING AND EVENING.—(From a Correspondent.)—The Tonbridge Wells amateurs had another musical banquet provided for them on Wednesday last, by the spirited resident professor, Mr. C. Goodban, when the following artists were engaged:—Miss Dolby and Mr. Lockey, vocalists; Mr. Goffrie (violin), Mr. H.W. Goodban (violin-cello), instrumentalists; Mr. C. Goodban presiding at the piano-forte. The concert commenced with Reissiger's trio, in C, for piano, violin, and violoncello. The compositions of this author, although his genius is by no means of a high order, abound in elegant and refined melody, skilful combinations, and musician-like development of ideas. The trio on this occasion was a favourable specimen of the Reissiger style; the movements are all well contrasted, the *motivi* pleasing and graceful, developed amid most exquisite changes and modulations, and charmingly varied with brilliant and effective passages. It was admirably given by the executants, who brought out all its points; the singing phrases giving each an opportunity of expressing his musical sentiment, as well as vigour and spirit in the bravura passages. Miss Dolby was welcomed warmly on her entrance into the orchestra. She sang an aria by Stradella, "O del mio," with much pathos. She is deservedly a favourite here, and throughout the evening more than confirmed her already well-established popularity. Hobbs' recitative and air, "Eulalie," was then sung by Mr. Lockey with his usual purity of style and chasteness of feeling. Mr. H. W. Goodban's solo on the violoncello was an admirable exhibition of taste and skill. The beautiful Irish air, "The Last Rose of Summer," which he introduced with variations, was adapted to show off the fine and agreeable tone he produced from his instrument. The ballad of "Orana," by Duggan, is a song of great merit, and was well sung by Miss Dolby, and well accompanied by the composer. The first act terminated with Mercadante's duet, "Di conforto." Mendelssohn's grand trio, in D minor, opened the second act. In the whole *répertoire* of classical chamber music, probably no one composition has obtained so great favour among pianists as this trio. Its great originality, extraordinary vigour of thought, richness of melody and harmony, and its beautiful combinations, have stamped it as one of the great masterpieces of this great master; and it may be listened to again and again with ever increasing pleasure. The artists were perfectly at home in this trio, and entered into the spirit of the composition with all their energies. Lachner's pleasing song, "When midnight's darkest veil," with violoncello obligato, was then given by Messrs. Lockey and H. W. Goodban, was loudly encored, the voice and the violoncello so beautifully blending with one another as to produce a charming effect. Miss Dolby won all hearts by her singing of "Terence's farewell," and the quaint border ballad, "Charlie yet," which she gave with admirable character. Mr. Goffrie performed a brilliant solo on the violin by Sainton, on airs from *Lucrezia Borgia*. The difficulties of this solo were achieved with great precision, and the effect produced was such as to make Mr. Goffrie well content with the appreciation of his talents by the audience. The concert terminated with a MS. duet, "Let it flow, though it ripple," composed by the *beneficiaire*, and sung by Miss Dolby and Mr. Lockey. It is a lively and pretty composition, was well sung, and loudly encored. Mr. C. Goodban sustained his character both as a pianist and composer on this occasion, and merits the thanks of the Tonbridge Wells amateurs, for providing so spirited an entertainment.

Miscellaneous.

MR. CHARLES KEMBLE.—Our readers will be pleased to hear that this eminent gentleman is in the enjoyment of excellent health, and feels as young and active as ever, and takes a great interest in theatrical affairs. At a dinner party recently given by Mr. and Mrs. Cooper* at their residence in Brompton, Mr. Charles Kemble met his old friend and theatrical comrade, Mrs. Davison, to whom he expressed his ardent wish to see the drama once more in the ascendant, and his readiness, were he not occasionally troubled with deafness, to give a series of performances at "Old

Mr. John Cooper the celebrated actor.

Drury," and yet more to aid the general effect and promote the interests of the theatre by playing some of the principal "old men" in the standard dramatic repertoire. Who would not be glad to welcome back again the veteran whose place can never be filled up?

THE HARMONIC UNION.—The first performance of this Society took place at Exeter-hall, on Friday last, under the direction of Mr. Benedict, before a large audience. The programme consisted of the National Anthem, Bach's Motet in B flat, for eight voices, and Mr. Horsley's new oratorio, *Joseph*. The performance was too remarkable to be dismissed in a paragraph, and the notice prepared by our reporter being too lengthy for insertion in this number, will be given in our next.

MR. BRINLEY RICHARDS left London on Thursday for Wales, where he spends the Christmas holidays.

MUSICAL INSTITUTE OF LONDON.—Saturday, December 18th.—The Rev. Mr. Nicolay in the chair. Herr Moscheles was admitted Honorary and Corresponding Fellow. A paper, written by Mr. Graham, "On words to be set to music," was read by the author, in the course of which he explained his views on the necessity of a careful attendance on the part of the composer to the accent of the words and the rhythm of the verse to which he was adapting his musical ideas. Having taken a general view of the various languages best fitted for musical treatment, the Lecturer entered on the subject of *libretti* for operas, contending that a slight story developing one grand idea, was best suited to the requirements of the lyrical drama. A discussion followed, in which several members of the Institute took part.

THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND entertained a distinguished party at the official residence, Admiralty, on Wednesday week, when the following members of the "English Glee and Madrigal Union," Miss E. Birch, Mr. Francis, Mr. Land, and Mr. Frank Bodda, had the honor of singing a selection of Glees, Madrigals, and naval songs, the performance of which afforded so much pleasure to the Duke and Duchess and their noble guests, that the same *artistes* were desired to give a similar concert at the Admiralty on Wednesday evening last. The concerts were under the direction of Mr. Land.

MR. F. W. ALLCROFT, favourably known in this vast metropolis as the donor of monster concerts, and his past and present connection with that elegant house of entertainment, the Lyceum, has taken the Strand Theatre for a winter campaign. It is to be opened on boxing-night, with an operatic and burlesque company. Amongst the engagements we may mention Misses Rebecca Isaacs, Reynolds (late of the Haymarket), and Miss F. Williams; Messrs. Borani, G. Tedder, and Leffler. An engagement is pending with Miss Adela Rochelle, a young artiste whose successful *début* has been already noticed in these columns. Herr Anschuetz is to be the musical conductor, and he has already secured the services of five-and-twenty instrumentalists of admitted talent. Mr. Allcroft promises a new operetta, entitled *The Sentinel*, the libretto by our popular friend, Mr. Dion Bourcicault, and the music by Mr. Stoepel, the talented musical conductor of the Theatre Royal, Princess's. We are also to have, from the fertile pen of the author of *London Assurance*, a bran new burlesque, to be called *Azel; or, what a sight for a Father*.

THE MARIONETTE AT THE ST. JAMES'S THEATRE.—The comic extravaganza of Don Giovanni, or the Spectre on Horseback, and Ethiopian entertainment, by the Ebony Marionettes, and a grand fairy spectacle, founded upon the popular Arabian story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, constitute the Christmas fare provided by the tasteful caterer who directs the Marionettes, and our report speaks very highly of the preparations that have been made, we shall be much surprised if the management does not reap a golden harvest from the holiday folks.

MR. G. A. OSBORNE, the popular composer and pianist, has returned to town from Paris, we are happy to inform our readers, unscathed by the railroad accident that happened near the Imperial city to the train in which that gentleman was a passenger. Mr. Osborne ascribes his safety to having nine fellow passengers, fatter than himself, in the same carriage; and he recommends all railway travellers to choose adipose "companions de voyage."

POLISH BALL.—This annual festivity was participated in last

evening by a goodly throng, in the splendidly decorated Guildhall of the City of London, which, by the grace of the Lord Mayor, and the civic authorities, had been placed at the disposal of the committee of the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland. The hall retained all the brilliancy which belonged to it on the occasion of the annual feast on Wednesday last, and the committee succeeded in adding all necessary facilities for the conversion of a banquetting room into a magnificent *salon de danse*. There were the same volunteer vocalists who have on so many former occasions, generously given their services, and contributed to the amusements of the evening by the exercise of their talents in the council chamber; and altogether the arrangements were such as we have rarely seen equalled under similar auspices. The hall was very full of company, and everybody appeared pleased. The Lord Mayor and his two daughters arrived about ten o'clock, accompanied by Mr. Sheriff Carter and Mr. Sheriff Croll. They were conducted by the committee to seats upon the dais in the concert room, where Lord Dudley Stuart and M. Schuttskey, the active secretary of the institution, were in attendance to receive and welcome them. We have said that there was a goodly attendance in the hall. The Countess of Beauchamp was there to hear her own song, "The Exile of Poland," admirably rendered by Miss Ransford; and we also remarked, among those present, Sir William Frazer, M.P., Mr. J. A. Smith and Miss Smith, Alderman Sir James Duke, M.P., Hon. Mrs. Abbott, Captain Townsend, M.P., Mr. Swift, M.P., Mr. Ex-Sheriff Nicoll, Mr. Chisholm Anstey, Captain Clifford, Miss Agnes Strickland, Mr. Monckton Milnes, M.P., &c. The hall was opened before ten o'clock to the music of a very excellent quadrille band, led by Adams. After the concert had concluded, dancing became more general, and we left some hundreds of happy couples threading the mazes of most diverting quadrilles at three o'clock. The comfort of the visitors was not a little aided by the arrangements of the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. R. Carr, an old member of the Common Council, who has for many years taken an active part in carrying out the details of this annual entertainment.—*Morning Post*, Dec. 16th.

HACKNEY.—(From a Correspondent).—On Tuesday evening, the 14th inst., Maddle Macher gave a concert, assisted by Miss Birch, Miss Lascelles, M. Pierre, and Mr. Frank Bodda, vocalists. Instrumentalists (piano-forte) Maddle Macher, (violin) Herr Kreutzer, (violinello) Herr Lutgen. The concert opened with a M.S. Polymelos, by Herr Anschuez, upon airs from *Puritani*, ably performed by Maddle Macher, Herren Kreutzero, and Lutgen; and which was received with great favour. It is a good trio, neatly written. The trio "O dolce e caro istante," by Misses Birch and Lascelles and M. Pierre, was well sung by the ladies, but Mr. Pierre could not be heard, whereby the beauty of the trio was lost. Mr. Pierre has a sweet tenor organ, what there is of it, but it is more fit for the drawing than the concert room. His other songs did not do him much more credit; he has a great deal to overcome before becoming an artist. Miss Birch, in "Ombra bello," from *Lucrezia Borgia*, was capital; her other songs went well. Of the fair beneficitaire's performance it may be said that she has a light and brilliant touch. Her rendering of the *Tarentella* of Thalberg was, indeed, an artistic effort. The chief gem of the evening was the immortal Mendelssohn's "Capriccio," in E minor, which was executed with so much nicety and effect, as to be re-demanded. In lieu of again repeating the same, Madame Macher gave one of Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne Worte," which was listened to with real attention, and at the finish rewarded with unanimous applause. The whole of the piano-forte pieces at once showed that Maddle Macher was an artist of no mean accomplishment and taste, and by her selecting so great a master's works as Mendelssohn's. Miss Lascelles, one of our best contraltos, was well received, and in Linley's popular ballad, "Ida," received a well-earned encore. The performance of Herren Kreutzer and Lutgen on the violin and violinello, was artistic in the strictest sense of the term. Herr Lutgen is a first-rate band by the way. Mr. Frank Bodda, as usual, sang "Largo al facotum," as also Lover's "Sally," in both of which he was encored. He was in his best mood, and enlivened the audience after the classical music was over. The vocal and instrumental solos were accompanied by Herr Anschuez. The Hall was

crowded in every part, and we hope the fair concert-giver realized a fair remuneration.

A grand evening concert was given in the hall of the Institution on Monday last, upon which occasion the following artists assisted:—Vocalists—The Misses Ransford, Rose Braham, and Lizzy Stuart, Messrs. Barsham, Genge, and Leffler—Instrumentalists—(concertina) Messrs. G. and J. Case, and Youens, (flute) Messrs. Hird and Toussaint, (piano-forte) Mr. W. Youens. The concert opened with the overture to *La Gazza Ladra*. The first encore of the evening was awarded to Miss Rose Braham, who looked as charming as ever, and sang her song in her own peculiar and arch manner. Miss Lizzy Stuart sang with good taste and finish, and was encored in the Jacobite song, "Bonnie Dundee." Mr. Barsham sang "Rage thou angry Storm," but did not make much of it: his other songs did not go better. Miss Ransford, who is a decided favourite with the Hackney folk, sang charmingly, and was encored in two of her songs. Mr. Leffler, who was in strong voice, was encored in all he sang. Mr. Genge received a similar compliment. Of the concertina playing of Mr. G. Case it would be needless to speak. The only drawback to the pleasures of the evening and the sensitive nerves of the lovers of good music, was the attempt upon the part of Mr. W. Youens to play Wallace's "Cracovienne," wherein he failed. He not only played out of tune, but jumbled the passages so much together, that all the beauties of the piece were entirely lost. It was as indifferently a specimen of pianoforte playing as has ever been heard in Hackney. The conductors were Messrs. G. Case and Haskins.

MISS STEELE, the talented vocalist, leaves town for Paris next week, to pass the Christmas vacation.

ROSSINI.—A letter from Trieste, in the Breslau newspaper, states:—"Among the remarkable sights in our town must be reckoned the appearance of the celebrated composer Rossini, who has purchased property here with a fortune of a couple of millions of francs. Rossini is a great amateur of fishing, and may be seen every day, as he puts out to sea in his elegant and comfortably arranged gondel, to entrap with net and hook the brisk inhabitants of the deep; but it is far more comical to see the corpulent old *maestro*, girt with a white apron, sitting as a salesman in the market, where he himself turns his booty into money; for he is no less a mercantile than a musical genius.—[We don't believe a word of it.—Ed.]

SHAKSPEARIAN READINGS IN YORKSHIRE.—The Countess of Zetland opens her mansion in Yorkshire for a series of readings by Miss Glynn during the Christmas holidays. The plays selected are *Hamlet*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, and *Macbeth*.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS has commenced publishing, in the *feuilleton* form, in one of the Paris daily newspapers, a new work, called *Isaac Laquedern*. In a sort of introduction, he tells the public that it is to occupy eighteen volumes, and that it is to be the result of twenty years' reading and reflection, and of innumerable journeyings—in fact, the grand work of his life—that on which he will base his claim to fame. From the opening chapters, it appears that this sparkling writer intends to make a display of classical and historical lore which nobody ever expected from him, because everybody knew that he did not possess it; and because, besides, there must needs be a sort of natural antipathy between his brilliant genius and mere book-learning. In this introduction, Alexandre makes known that from the commencement of his literary career up to the present time he has produced not fewer than seven hundred volumes, and fifty plays.

ANOTHER IRISH PRIMA DONNA.—It has seemed like a reproach to the land of song of late years, that Ireland has given but a single star to the operatic stage or the concert room; and though the celebrity so justly acquired by Catherine Hayes has maintained the reputation of the "old country" wherever the land's language is spoken, we could not but regret that she should have been alone in winning from fame and fortune a glorious and golden triumph. We are rejoiced, therefore, to be able to announce on the best possible authority, that another pupil of that celebrated master, Emanuel Garcia, and a native of this city, is likely very soon to share the musical honours heretofore monopolised by Lind, Hayes,

and Viardot. The young lady to whom we allude is Miss Ellen Couran, a daughter of the eminent pianist, Wm. Couran, and her voice, a pure mezzo-soprano, rich in tone and perfect in intonation, has been pronounced by her great master to be of the very first and finest quality. To the concert room and oratorio, for which Miss Couran is first destined, she will prove a welcome acquisition, and we are in anxious anticipation of her first public appearance, when, we have no doubt, the best judges will declare her eminently worthy to maintain the musical celebrity of her birth-land.—*Dublin Evening Packet*.

MADAME MARA.—THE POWER OF MUSIC.—At length, in 1799, after having resided at the Prussian court, as first singer, for nearly ten years, Elizabeth Mara obtained her most welcome dismissal. "Now," she wrote to her friends, "the imprisoned bird is let free, and can fly everywhere." She went to Vienna, where an incident occurred of which she always spoke as the most gratifying and exciting she had ever known. We will give the full particulars of an example of the power of harmony, only equalled by the story in Holy Writ, of that sweet singer of Israel, who charmed by his melody the gloomy demon from his royal master. Count S—, a powerful Hungarian noble, had lost, under the most distressing circumstances, his only child, a beautiful girl, on the eve of marriage. Although two years had elapsed since this bereavement, the unhappy father remained in the most melancholy condition. From the hour when he looked his last on the dead body of his child, he had remained in the same room, shedding no tears, and uttering no complaints, but in speechless melancholy and despair. The most celebrated physicians had been consulted, and every means that could be thought of used, to waken Count S— from his lethargy of grief; but all was in vain; and his medical attendants at length despaired of his recovery. Most fortunately, a member of the sufferer's family had heard Mara sing, and entertained a firm belief that if any sound on earth could reach the heart which was already buried in his daughter's grave, that voice, which seemed more like that of an angel than a human being, would have power. The other relatives, though hoping little from the experiment, yielded to the solicitations of this sanguine friend, and every arrangement was made to give full effect to the singer. An ante-room, opening into that where the count sat, was prepared. The choir for an oratorio was placed in a concealed gallery. Mara alone stood in the foreground, yet in such a position that she could not be seen in the next room, which was hung with black, and a faint, shadowy twilight only admitted, excepting a few golden rays from a small lamp, which burned in a niche before a beautiful Madonna. Suddenly, upon the solitude and silence of that sick room, there broke a wonderful harmony. Elizabeth had chosen Handel's "Messiah," and took her place, deeply moved with the singular circumstances under which she was to exert her talents. At first, the music and that heavenly voice all seemed to be unheeded; but by degrees, the desolate parent raised himself on his couch, and glanced with earnest longing towards the spot whence those soul-moving sounds proceeded. At length, when Mara sang those words—"Look and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow," she appeared inspired by the sympathy she felt; and the relatives of the count, who listened with beating hearts, could not restrain their tears. Nor did these alone bear witness to the singer's power: heavy sighs escaped the sufferer, large tears stood in those eyes which the very extremity of grief itself had long forbidden to weep. Crossing the room with feeble steps, he prostrated himself before the image of that Heavenly One, who "bore all our griefs;" and when the full choir joined in the hallelujah chorus, his voice of praise and thanksgiving mingled with those strains. The recovery was not only complete, but lasting, and was at the time the marvel of Germany.—*Sharpe's Magazine*.

THE QUEEN OF SPADES.—An opera under this title has been lately produced, under the direction of Mr. R. Phillips, at Mr. Conquest's Theatre, City Road (the Royal Grecian). The libretto is by Mr. C. Webb, and the music by Mr. W. Montgomery. The opera has been highly successful. Miss Helen Condell in Daria (disguised as the Queen of Spades) sings delightfully, and has added considerably to her reputation as a vocalist and actress by her assumption of this, we believe her original, character. Mr. Montgomery's clever music pleased very much; it is melo-

dious, well written, and does him great credit as a composer. The scenery is excellent; the chateau, the salt mines, the gardens at Carlsbad, and the gaming saloon, are all well painted. The new ballet, *L'union des Nations*, continues attractive. Mrs. Conquest's pupils reflect great credit on their talented instructor. The costumes are elegant, and the dances are pretty and characteristic.

NEW YORK.—Mr. Thackeray, author of *Vanity Fair*, delivered his first lecture to a crowded audience at New York, on the 12th ult.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A SUBSCRIBER TO THE MUSICAL WORLD.—The publication of our Correspondent's letter might get us into an action for libel should its object be carried out. We have a strong repugnance to law, and therefore must civilly decline it.

CHILL-BLAIN.—Our Correspondent is egregiously wrong. He had better rub his hands, and think the matter over again.

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"Mr. H. Distin, 31, Cranbourn Street, Leicester Square, London."

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"Dear Sir,—In answer to your letter, I beg to say that the Piccolo Cornet you supplied to our band is certainly one of the best leading instruments I have ever heard, being extremely easy to procure the upper notes, and at the same time very powerful. I can strongly recommend this instrument as being first rate for leading a brass band.
"I am, dear Sir, yours truly,
"H. SCHALLER, Music Director, 17th Lancers.
"Mr. H. Distin, 31, Cranbourn Street, Leicester Square, London."

BRINLEY RICHARDS'S LA REINE BLANCHE.

GRAND Galop, 4s.; Recollections of Wales for the pianoforte, eight numbers, 3s. each; the Homeward March, 3s.; the Angel's Song, 2s.; the Vision, 2s.; the Storm March Galop, 3s. Also, in numbers, 'The Classical Pianist,' and 'The Student's Practice,' both series fingered by Mr. Brinley Richards. Speaking of the Galop, the Editor of the Musical World describes it as fully worthy of the light and airy fingers of M. Emile Prudent. "Few living composers for the pianoforte," he continues, "excel Mr. Richards in this species of writing; he knows the art of combining the ad captandum with the better qualities of the musician. His Galop is not merely brilliant—it is elegant, well-written, and in more than one instance, *recherché*." London: Robert Cocks and Co., New Burlington Street, Publishers to the Queen.

THE Leading Ballads of the Day seem to be "Mary Astor," "The Tear," and "The Sunshine of our Home," the latter constantly sung with rapturous applause by Miss Dolby. This accomplished vocalist is rising rapidly to the zenith of public favour, and her beautiful rendering of this touching song (which, by the way, Edward Lamb composed expressly for her) is at least equal to any of her numerous triumphs. The Poetry (Mr. Carpenter's) inspired the composer, and he has transmitted the inspiration, clothed in melody, to the accomplished singer, who never fails to charm her audience with the heartfelt strains, 'Mary Astor,' by Stephen Glover, and 'The Tear,' by Kucken, are taking a like position in popular favour, and afford Miss Dolby new opportunities of shading her fair brow with undying laurels.—*Observer*, Dec. 29, 1852.

TO the Heads of Schools.—Hamilton's Modern Instructions for the Pianoforte. Edited by Czerny. 33rd edition, 48 large folio pages, 4s. "It really deserves all the popularity it enjoys." Sunday Times. "The veriest child may learn from Hamilton's book." Berwick Warder. "A complete grammar for the pianoforte student." Morning Advertiser. "This book is unapproachable." Dublin World. "A child might become proficient by attending to its directions." North Wales Chronicle. London: Robert Cocks and Co., New Burlington-street, and of all music-sellers.

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BEG to Announce that owing to delays arising from the difficulty of obtaining the correct Addresses of all the Professors, and a faithful Register of all Music published during the present year, throughout the United Kingdom, the Publication of the "Musical Directory," is unavoidably postponed, until the end of the Month, when it will be ready for delivery with the Magazines (Tuesday, the 28th inst.) and they have to request that if any Professors, or Music and Musical Instrument Sellers, have by chance, not been applied to, they will kindly forward their names and addresses to 100, New Bond Street, to be inserted in the proof sheets. Messrs. Rudall, Rose, & Carte, have also to request that those Ladies and Gentlemen who have written to them on the subject of the "Musical Directory" will kindly excuse their replying except in this general manner—the influx of letters has been such as to render impossible any attempt to do more than this. They beg to thank them, one and all, for their numerous suggestions, which shall receive every attention, and for their warmly expressed approbation of their undertaking.

PROSPECTUS.

OUR Universities have their annual CALENDARS and ALMANACKS; the Medical Profession has its admirable MEDICAL DIRECTORY; the Law has a similar work; Painting and Sculpture embody, in the FINE ARTS ALMANACK, a concentration of valuable information which cannot be obtained elsewhere;—these, and numerous other publications, are annually distributed for the use and gratification of those who take interest in the several departments they illustrate; but there is no similar channel through which those devoted to Music may have conveyed to them the multifarious information connected with this most universal and delightful of all the arts and sciences.

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THE Series of Concerts for the Season of 1853, will take place in Exeter-hall, commencing in March. The arrangements with regard to the orchestra and chorus, will be on the same scale as last year. The Directors, anxious to carry out the views set forth in their original prospectus, of affording opportunities for the execution of music of the highest order, are in treaty with a distinguished German Composer, who, with Dr. Wylde, will conduct the concerts. Subscribers to the Concerts for the Season of 1853, will have the refusal of seats in the New Philharmonic Hall, which is intended to be a building of the most appropriate kind, and will be opened for the season of 1854. By order of the Directors. 201, Regent-street, Dec. 13, 1852.

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